


**BRAND COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT
CONSIDERING THE PERCEPTION OF POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS**

**COMPETITIVIDADE DA MARCA ATRAVÉS DO DESENVOLVIMENTO DO
PRODUTO CONSIDERANDO A PERCEPÇÃO DE POTENCIAIS CLIENTES**

**LA COMPETITIVIDAD DE LA MARCA A TRAVÉS DEL DESARROLLO DE
PRODUCTOS CONSIDERANDO LA PERCEPCIÓN DE LOS CLIENTES
POTENCIALES**

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ABSTRACT

Brand a company allows to differ it from the others ones and be distinctive by consumers. In this way, the organizations that work to maintain a position through having a brand obtain competitive advantages over others which simply engage in marketing their products or services in a traditional way. On the other hand, innovation is the added value of any brand, which allows to differentiate it from the competition moreover. The main objective of this research is to find out the perception that Santander's young people have of the brand Youth without DNA, moreover to know how feasible is it to sell customized products looking for brand positioning. This investigation is carried out through a sample of 384 students between 14 and 28 years. The statistical techniques used were descriptive and multivariate ANOVA to demonstrate the relationships between the variables. The results show a level of acceptance by young people to Juventud sin ADN-branded item consumption. Detected that customers of the brand perception is oriented towards the identification of your preference, the type of potential client products, distribution channels chosen by persons investigated and analyze aspects of higher influence at the time of purchase of a young client. Finally, proposed improvements to take advantage of the brand in a more competitive way.

Keywords: Innovation. Competitiveness. Brand. Customers. Internet Marketing.

RESUMO

A marca de uma empresa permite que ela se diferencie das demais e seja preferida pelos consumidores. Nesse sentido, organizações que trabalham para manter seu posicionamento por meio de sua marca têm uma vantagem competitiva sobre outras que simplesmente comercializam seus produtos ou serviços de forma tradicional. Por outro lado, a inovação é o valor agregado de qualquer marca que permite que ela se diferencie da concorrência. Esta pesquisa busca mensurar a percepção que os jovens de Santander têm da marca Juventud sin ADN em relação à proposta de comercializar produtos personalizados buscando posicionamento de marca. O estudo é descritivo,

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considerando uma amostra de 384 estudantes entre 14 e 28 anos. As técnicas estatísticas utilizadas foram descritivas e multivariadas, como a ANOVA, para demonstrar as relações entre as variáveis. Os resultados mostram um nível de aceitação entre os jovens para o consumo de produtos com a marca Juventud sin ADN. Constatou-se que as percepções dos clientes sobre a marca são orientadas para identificar seus produtos preferidos, o tipo de cliente potencial, os canais de distribuição escolhidos pelos entrevistados e analisar os fatores mais influentes na decisão de compra de um cliente jovem. Por fim, são propostas ações de melhoria para alavancar a marca de forma mais competitiva.

Palavras-chave: Inovação. Competitividade. Marca. Clientes. Marketing Digital.

RESUMEN

La marca en una empresa permite que se diferencie de la otra y que sea preferida por los consumidores. En este sentido, las organizaciones que trabajan por mantener el posicionamiento a través de la marca tienen ventaja competitiva frente a otras que simplemente se dedican a mercadear sus productos o servicios de forma tradicional. De otro lado, la innovación es el valor agregado de cualquier marca que la permite diferenciar de la competencia. Esta investigación busca medir la percepción que tienen los jóvenes de Santander de la marca Juventud sin ADN sobre la propuesta de comercializar productos personalizados buscando el posicionamiento de marca. El estudio es descriptivo considerando una muestra de 384 estudiantes entre los 14 y 28 años. Las técnicas estadísticas utilizadas fueron descriptivas y multivariantes como el ANOVA para evidenciar las relaciones entre las variables. Los resultados evidencian un nivel de aceptación por parte de los jóvenes para el consumo de artículos con la marca Juventud sin ADN. Se detectó que la percepción que tienen los clientes de la marca se orienta hacia la identificación de los productos de su preferencia, el tipo de cliente potencial, los canales de distribución elegidos por las personas investigadas, y analizar los aspectos de mayor influencia en el momento de compra de un cliente joven. Finalmente, se proponen acciones de mejora para aprovechar la marca de una forma más competitiva.

Palabras clave: Innovación. Competitividad. Marca. Clientes. Comercialización por Internet.

1 INTRODUCTION

The brand has a dimensional power causing its own identity to the products, generating in consumers a mental conception, allowing brand recall through the perception they have about a product or service (Estrada & Maciel, 2018). It is evident that a company through *branding* (branding) manages to develop its intangible assets because it generates trust, identity, and recognition generating added value that comes from its brand (Nguyen, Romaniuk, Faulkner & Cohen, 2018). Precisely, if companies manage to enhance their brand through new products that are accepted in the market, they have the possibility of accessing other markets, improving their positioning and being competitive (Narváez & Aveiga, 2018). There are companies that carry out their marketing strategies through the use of the brand through the diversification of their products or services through the exposure of their customers' experiences, creating in their mind a concept of the perceived brand, where through word of mouth, they begin to increase their positioning (Chávez & García, 2018).

In 2017, 559 billion dollars were invested in brand positioning around the world (Lau & Lim, 2018). There are different brands such as Nike, Adidas, Coca Cola that are very well positioned worldwide (Puma, Quimi & Zea, 2017). Among its strategies are the diversification of its products to build customer loyalty and reposition the brand in the minds of each of the buyers (Raygoza, Guzmán, María, Escamilla & Medel, 2018). On the other hand, innovation is oriented in different directions, in terms of the marketing strategy of a product, avoiding the imitation of others and helping companies to be identified because they offer new aspects to customers (Echeverría, 2015). For example, Coca Cola seeks to be very close to the needs and desires of its consumers, through the renewal of its image, launching new products on the market and with its own identity linked to the original essence (Coca Cola, 2018), precisely, the company in this study is Youth without DNA (Alcohol, Drugs, Nicotina), a foundation that through its social work seeks to prevent the consumption of psychoactive substances through entrepreneurship, and seeks to market products, with the purpose of making its brand known and positioning it in its market niche.

This research seeks to analyze the different aspects that influence consumers to take advantage of the brand, considering a sample of young people between 14 and 28 years of age, to identify the factors that influence the purchase decision on products of

the Youth without DNA brand and thus specify good practices that favor the development of competitiveness in organizations.

2 OBJECTIVES

2.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To determine the factors of competitiveness that affect the development of products with the Youth without DNA brand based on the perception of potential customers.

2.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

To analyse the level of acceptance of the Youth without DNA brand, looking for strategies for its commercialisation.

To analyze the preference of young people in terms of the products that should be marketed from the Youth without DNA brand, as well as their distribution channels.

To evaluate the aspects that influence the purchase decision of young people who follow the Juventud ADN brand, establishing the required marketing channels.

3 THEORETICAL REFERENCE

Competitiveness and strategy

In a globalized market, it is increasingly difficult to compete, for this reason, organizations need to explore new markets based on the approach of value propositions that allow them to be different from the competition (Leonidou & Hultman, 2018). The competitiveness of a company considering its marketing strategies is based on the development of organizational skills that lead to generating value by facilitating competition in globalized markets (Carreras, Arroyo & Blanco, 2018). Precisely, among the indicators that measure the above are: the reduction of unemployment rates, the generation of jobs that favor inclusion, and the increase in productivity as a result of the use of innovation in production processes (Germán, Melo, Salazar & Núñez, 2018). Competitiveness is oriented towards the differentiation of organizations based on the approach of marketing strategies that are adjusted to the different national and international markets (Leonidou & Hultman, 2018).

On the other hand, strategic planning is essential in the construction of small and medium-sized enterprises when its objective is to strengthen internal and external factors

in the company as a mechanism for increasing business competitiveness through its recognition in the market (Carreras, Arroyo & Blanco, 2018). In Latin America, the main causes of the lack of competitiveness are: the lack of training for personnel, the absence of technology, and low competitive capacity in productive, administrative, managerial, and service processes (Arroyo, 2018).

On the other hand, strategic direction influences whether a new brand remains in the market, according to the perception of consumers, according to its reputation (Carreras, Arroyo & Blanco, 2018). It is evident that the development of strategies allows the company to get closer to consumers, bringing it closer to its new marketing target groups (Arroyo, 2018).

Innovation

The Oslo Manual defines innovation as that which in one way or another contributes to the improvement of a product, service or process and that is perceived by customers (OECD, 2005). Therefore, continuous improvement in the business environment implies the orientation of innovation policies to have an impact on the purchasing power of consumers generating added and differentiating value (Rossi, 2018), also evidenced in the organizational processes to deliver products or services focused on the target market of companies (Silva & William, 2018).

In this sense, differentiation in a product or service is an alternative to achieve higher levels of competitiveness by seeking to attract new customers and retain existing ones (Leonidou & Hultman, 2018). Precisely, differentiation allows organizations to compete in markets (Silva, 2018) seeking to meet customer expectations (De las Casas, 2018).

In addition, innovation is linked to competitiveness in the company, allowing the transformation of organizations in terms of change in their processes, contributing to the economic improvement of a region (Díaz, 2018). For example, in recent years, there has been an increase in the number of family businesses that, based on innovative and creative ideas, offer products or services aimed at improving their quality of life (Rondi, 2018). Therefore, it is evident that entrepreneurship is a way of innovating through the approach of business ideas aimed at taking advantage of opportunities through the effort of people to achieve a goal and turn it into a company, as indicated by Jaramillo in his research carried out in 2008 and cited by Nwokike (2017). Large companies such as

Walmart, Ford, Volkswagen, Comocast, and BMW have performed and included innovative aspects in their processes and products (Peterson, 2015).

The brand

As mentioned (Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L., 2012), a brand is known when it manages to be in the consumer's mind and that in one way or another acts as an influencer at the time of making a purchase. (Mora, Flores & Meza, 2018). This encompasses a series of elements: the memory of associated experiences, the ease of recall due to their characteristics, and allows establishing a sale price according to their positioning in the market (Gómez, Pérez & Barbosa, 2018).

Finding the right means to promote the brand requires the identification of strategies that attract the attention of customers to achieve positioning and therefore increase sales (Cruz, Chávez & Pérez, 2017; Lee, Kim & Won, 2018). For example, when a person or family is an entrepreneur, they explore new business opportunities, looking for opportunities in abandoned or dissatisfied markets, providing proposals that contribute to the satisfaction of consumers' desires and expectations and that contribute to solving customer problems (Martínez, Pérez & Silva, 2018; Pinto, do Céu Taveira & Sá, 2018) promoting brand appropriation. Finally, it is necessary for companies to consider their strategies considering the capabilities of human talent, to increase the dissemination of the brand with the appropriation of workers (Nwokike, 2017).

Internet marketing

By 2021, it is estimated that the number of people using social networks will be 1,800 million, an important figure for organizations considering reaching niche markets and the end consumer (Venegas, 2018). Social networks become great allies of MSMEs because they facilitate the planning and execution of marketing strategies at a low cost and their reach is immense, allowing them to have an unlimited market opening (Zallas & Figueroa, 2018).

The social networks most used by MSMEs within their digital marketing strategy are WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, however, 82% of micro, small, and medium-sized companies only use them to send messages and administrative tasks, that is, there is a waste of the use of digital tools that need to be enhanced (López, Beltrán, Morales & Cavero, 2018). On the other hand, consumers increasingly prefer to have access to digital platforms from their cell phones, where from 2009 to 2011 the increase was significant, going from 92% to 97%. This implies that this increase forces companies

to venture into technological platforms with mobile applications, facilitating interaction with customers (Torres & Aguilar, 2018).

Digital entrepreneurship

Companies need to be in different scenarios from the traditional one and migrating to digital platforms has become the new strategies of organizations in the search for a competitive positioning, for this it is required access to the innovative digital ecosystem that meets the expectations and needs of customers. Digital entrepreneurship opens the door to open innovation, which allows organizations to accept that all relevant information is not only inside companies and requires breaking down schemes and borders to give the possibility of exploring new knowledge combining internal and external knowledge. Open innovation entails undertaking from the various digital platforms in challenge mode, challenging organizations to meet the needs of a previously defined audience. (Dezuanni, Foth, Mallan, & Hughes, 2018)(Uña, Narbona, Álvarez-Rentería, & Rincón, 2018)(Liao & Xu, 2020)

Social entrepreneurship

Doing business with a social sense drives the transformation of socioeconomic, legal, political, and business environments, involving factors that have a decisive impact on the improvement of the quality of people from the generation of value by organizations in the development of goods and services. (Aliaga-Isla & Huybrechts, 2018)

4 METHODOLOGY

The research is descriptive and is based on the perception in youth populations about the Youth without DNA brand (Alcohol, Drugs, Nicotine) to establish marketing strategies.

The sample size was 384 young people distributed as follows: 35.2% through social networks (Facebook and WhatsApp) to young people from 14 to 28 years old, 33.3% in the metropolitan area in the Technological Units of Santander with young people from 17 to 28 years old and a few over 28 years old, and 31.5% in the communal province in the Avenila Moreno School of the Municipality of Socorro with young people between 14 and 18 years old.

The instrument used was a virtual form through which the responses were collected. It is composed of the following dimensions: the positioning of the Youth without DNA brand among young people in the department of Santander, the means of

preference of young people to consume a certain type of product, and the establishment of the products that need to be marketed and that will be accepted by young people, such as agendas, pens, caps and shirts.

The objective of Youth without DNA (Alcohol, Drugs, Nicotine) is to contribute to the prevention of the consumption of psychoactive substances, offering young people alternatives to undertake projects without dependence on vices, managing to develop their dreams, goals and taking advantage of their skills being part of the solution to social problems. The company was born as a research project in the classroom to establish an innovative way to prevent the consumption of psychoactive substances, through a proposal that captures the attention of young people through a television program with the publication of content of interest opportunities for them to develop their companies and become entrepreneurs. To this end, interviews are carried out with influential characters in the youth context, musical segments with artists of the moment, and themes presented in a language familiar to the young viewer. Currently the program is broadcast on Saturdays at 3:30 pm on the regional channel TRO that has its audience in Santander and Norte de Santander.

5 RESULTS

The results show that, with respect to the age of the respondents, the distribution by ranges is: 69.0% *between 14-19 years old*, 20.6% *between 20-24 years old*, 10.4% *over 25 years old*. Meanwhile, gender corresponds to 56.0% women and 44.0% men.

It is evident that 54.4% of those surveyed do not know the brand, showing the need to propose strategies that allow the brand's positioning to be achieved.

The three segments investigated are willing to buy items with the Youth without DNA brand, that is, the marketing of diaries, caps, pens, and t-shirts, have acceptance by the target market for the entire sample. It is highlighted that 35.2% would buy all the items proposed in the research. Table 1 shows the distribution by product and target segment.

Table 1

Willingness of young people to purchase the products of the Juventud ADN brand

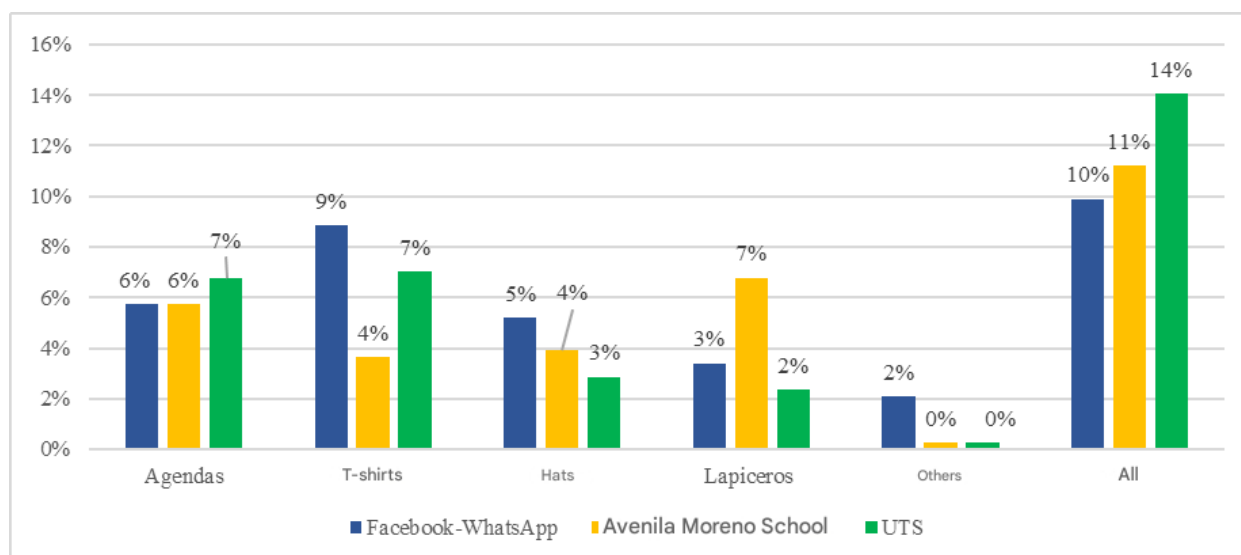
Age range in years	Product offered to consumers						Total per row
	Agenda	T-shirt	Cap	Pen	Other	All	
14 and 19	14.3%	12.2%	6.8%	9.9%	1.6%	24.2%	69.0%
20 and 24	3.6%	6.0%	3.1%	1.8%	0.3%	6.0%	20.6%
25 and 28	0.0%	.5%	1.0%	0.3%	0.5%	1.3%	3.6%
> of 28	0.3%	0.8%	1.0%	0.5%	0.3%	3.9%	6.8%
Total	18.2%	19.5%	12.0%	12.5%	2.6%	35.2%	100.0%

Source: The authors.

These results indicate that the three segments are willing to acquire the products, being a business opportunity to improve the positioning of the brand, as can be seen in Figure 1, where it is detected that the preference is for all the products that are being offered to position the Youth without DNA brand.

Figure 1

Distribution of customer preferences by product



To know the distribution channels preferred by customers to purchase products, it was detected that 36.5% prefer different stores such as stationery stores, supermarkets, small commercial establishments aimed at the youth population, followed by 26.6% who prefer the internet through social networks and WhatsApp, and 23.7% exclusive stores

that sell directly from the Youth without DNA brand. Table 2 shows the distribution by segment.

Table 2

Distribution channel preferred by young people to acquire the products of the Juventud sin ADN brand

Age range in years	Product offered to consumers						Total per row
	Shop	TExclu	Internet	Catalogue	Other	All	
14 and 19	25.3%	16.1%	16.1%	5.7%	0.3%	5.5%	69.0%
20 and 24	5.2%	3.4%	6.3%	1.8%	0.8%	3.1%	20.6%
25 and 28	1.8%	0.8%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%
> of 28	1.8%	0.8%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%
Total	34.6%	21.6%	24.2%	8.3%	1.3%	9.9%	100.0%

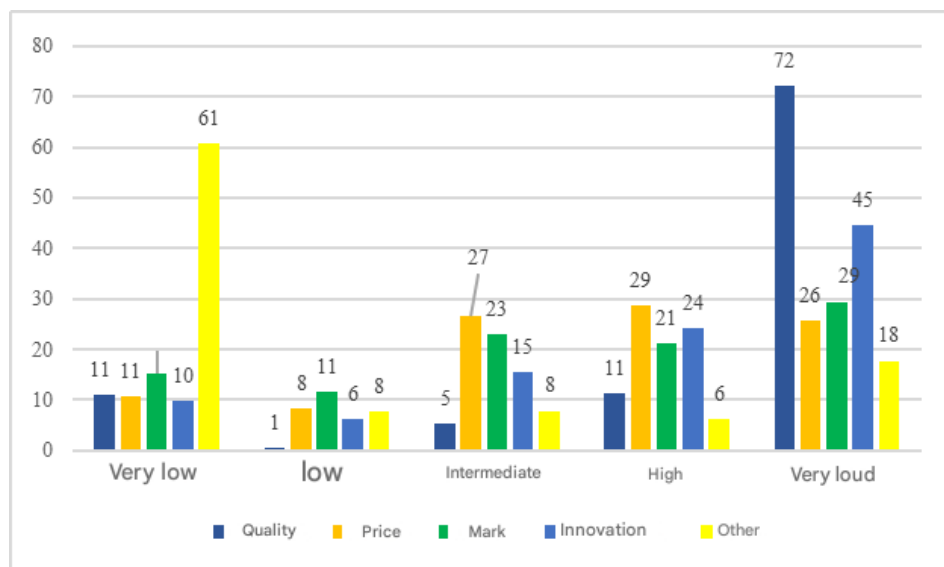
This allows us to assert that advertising strategies towards majority and minority distributors must be intensified to satisfy the target market. In addition, it is necessary to include a commercial channel through the internet, which can be social networks or stores that have direct distribution to reach the target market.

Figure 2 allows us to determine which aspects influence the decision to purchase the company's products. It is observed that quality is the most important aspect, according to 72.1% for the three segments: 74.2% of university students, 86% of school students, and 57.8% of young people. In this sense, it is important to indicate that quality must be

the main characteristic of products to contribute to their competitiveness and thus be in the minds of customers.

Figure 2

Aspects that influence the purchase decision of Youth without DNA products



On the other hand, the price is also important considering that the purchasing power of this population segment is low, considering that most of them depend economically on their parents and others do not have such high incomes, for this reason products must be designed adjusted to the economy of the target market.

On the other hand, for 29.4% of those surveyed, they indicate that the brand is the third important aspect to consume. This is important because it allows us to establish that brand positioning is essential for Youth without DNA products to be consumed and therefore to establish strategies that lead to brand recall. According to the demographic context, the brand must first propose a cost structure and adjust it to the target market, in this way innovative products can be reached, considering that they are tailor-made for the consumer.

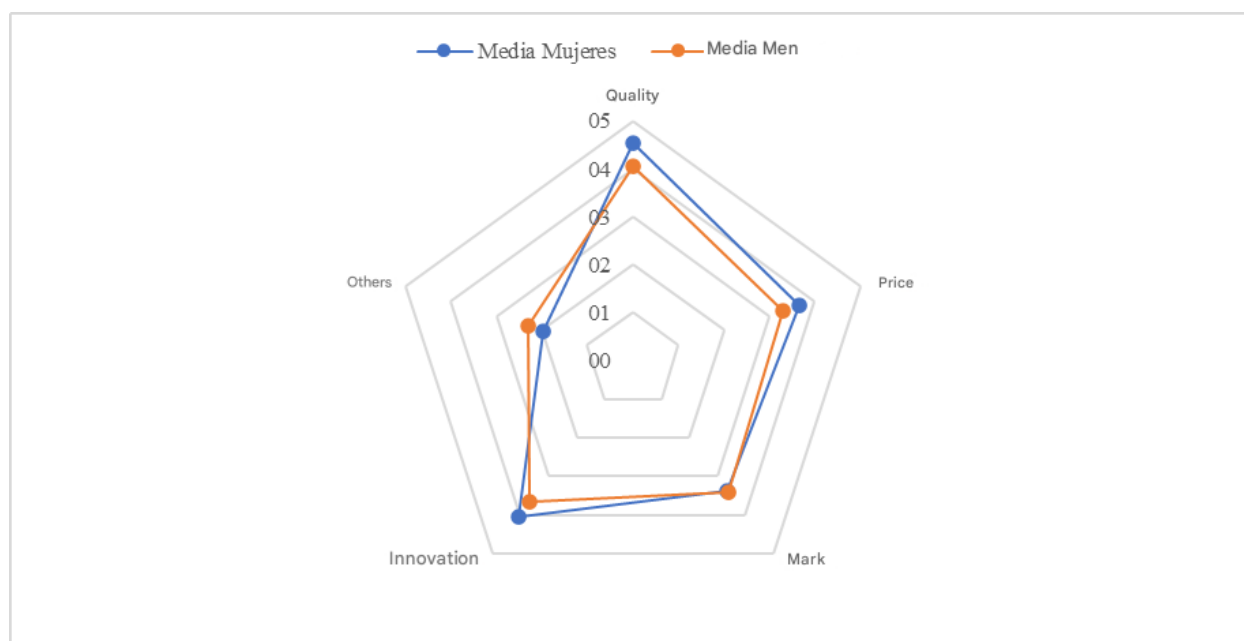
44.5% of young people rate innovation as very important when buying a product. This implies that it is necessary to include in the products a differentiating factor and an added value that allows them to be above the competition.

Finally, as for other factors such as preferences or needs that may vary according to the circumstances, considering the variables gender and age. Figure 3 shows the distribution by gender when considering the importance of each factor in the products of

the Youth without DNA brand, where when performing the ANOVA it is detected that with the variable there are significant differences according to the means that young people have proposed to acquire the products, where women prefer quality and price. while men mark it ($p < .001$).

Figure 3

Distribution by gender on the importance of the factors that are required of the products of Youth without DNA



In the search to achieve a brand positioning, it is thought to develop products that carry its seal, for this reason it is planned to take advantage of the brand in the diversification of products, for this it takes advantage of this information knowing the opinion of the youth population.

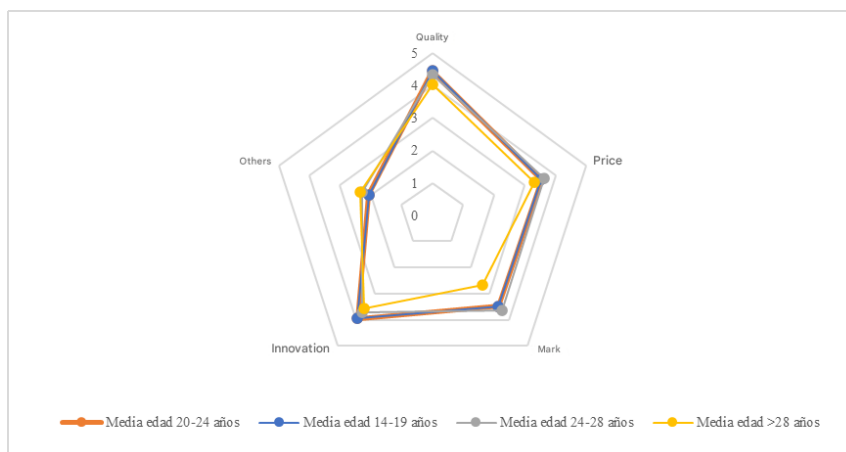
Regarding the age variable of the participants, when performing the ANOVA it is detected that there are significant differences according to the means that the young people have proposed to acquire the products, where the brand ($p < .008$) and the price ($p < .001$) are important for those between 14-19 and between 24-20 years old. while those over 24 years of age prefer the quality of the product ($p < .001$).

The above allows us to assert that according to the diverse perceptions of the interest groups, Youth without DNA can propose an innovative proposal that contributes

to supporting young people so that they consider other options such as the creation of companies for the improvement of their own lives.

Figure 4

Distribution of participants' preferences regarding the factor that is required to be included in the products of Youth without DNA according to the age of the participants



6 DISCUSSIONS

The positioning of a brand for young people in a globalized world is the great challenge of entrepreneurship, various strategies must be identified that guarantee the success of the products in the market. Each population segment has a different behavior when making a purchase, as young people their purchase is influenced by the quality of the product they are going to purchase, 72.1% state that it is the aspect with the greatest influence on their purchasing decision. The great mistake of companies is to create a high level of expectation in their advertising strategies in which they stimulate the consumer's imagination by creating an image of the product and even experience about it, and at the moment of truth everything collapses since the products or services offered fail to meet the needs of customers.

The positioning of a brand is connected to its quality, the top of mind shows that consumers think first of certain brands that they perceive to be of higher quality than others.

Innovation seduces young people who, in the face of novelties, tend to increase their frequency of purchase, continuous improvement in products and services allows companies to be recognized in the target market with greater preference over the competition, 44.5% of the young people surveyed consider that innovation in products

exerts a stimulus on them to make a purchase. Product launches whose main characteristic has to do with innovation achieve a 25% increase in sales, according to Philippe Gelder, CEO Product of the Year (Acuña, 2016)(Gelder, 2019)

Making and building a brand becomes easier if the products contain a seal of quality and innovation and that is when the price is not determined by the consumer but by the supplier because it has an added and differentiated value to that offered by the competition, 29.4% of the young people who are the subjects of this research say they look at the brand before buying, It is a percentage that opens the door to new brands that venture into the market, if new ventures have quality and innovation, their brand positioning will be easier and the growth in sales will have an upward curve trend since the customer will value having an excellent experience with the brand. it strengthens their image and perception in the thinking of the market segment in which they interact.

In a digital market ecosystem, the trend of buying online continues to grow constantly, trust with the consumer when making a purchase allows the user to become loyal to a brand. 27% of young people consulted prefer an online store to purchase products, the brand that this website represents must guarantee that what is offered in the image or advertising post is identical to the one that the buyer will receive when having contact with the product, this increases their probability of new purchases, their universe of customers grows, and market share increases.

Sales on the internet or through social networks must have as great allies quality, innovation, which lead to the positioning of the brand generating confidence in the buyer, 19% of users in Colombia do E-commerce (buy and pay online), there is still no culture of online shopping, and one of the reasons is the lack of computer security, When the products are received by customers, they do not meet the specifications mentioned in the sales channel, that is, misleading advertising, unbalanced cost/benefit causing little credibility in the market niche. Quality in the broadest sense of the word encompasses several concepts, including security when buying, guarantee that the product meets what it promises and the price is fair; If a venture manages to comply with these three aspects in its virtual store, it will increase its confidence in its segment and will have a greater chance of being bought again and recommended by potential customers, innovation gives the added value that oxygenates the company's sales force, resulting in a brand positioning generated by the products that are marketed under the clothing provided by a brand. (Mintic, 2019)

7 CONCLUSIONS

This study sought to know the acceptance of products with the Juventud sin ADN brand by young people from Santander. With the information collected, strategies can be established that facilitate decision-making regarding the potential market by offering products or services that meet demand.

The Youth without DNA brand must begin a process of positioning itself in the market that allows it to have a higher level of recall by potential customers.

In this sense, the brand becomes important when it remains in people's minds and they remember it while consuming, due to the advertising issue that has been made.

The importance of the brand influences the consumer's purchase decision according to their experience, beyond the marketing strategies of companies, since it is necessary to consider that the customer must feel satisfied with the product or service purchased. For this reason, MSMEs need to invest in brand awareness, as this gives it identity and generates trust in the consumer, to be the first to be in the minds of customers.

Youth without DNA can launch the four product lines proposed in the research (T-shirts, Diaries, pens, and caps) on the market. The two products most preferred by young people are t-shirts and agendas, however, strategies must be designed to make attractive the other products that had a low percentage of acceptance such as pens and caps. In this sense, Youth without DNA will have to work on innovating in the products it will launch on the market, including differentiating factors.

The distribution channels must be commercial establishments that are located near the educational institutions that allow them to be offered to young people, and through a virtual store on a web portal and app to make effective the development of their marketing plan.

Quality is the most important factor for the target audience, considering that the business policy of Youth without DNA must be oriented towards this aspect to have a good perception of the brand, and therefore generating confidence in the buyer, guaranteeing customer loyalty. Innovation plays an important role, in the market there are many substitute products of equal similarity, only products that innovate and create value manage to generate purchase expectations.

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